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2

T H E  
T O R P E D O,  
A  
P O E M  
T O T H E  
E L E C T R I C A L E E L.

ADDRESSED TO  
Mr. JOHN HUNTER, SURGEON:  
AND DEDICATED TO  
The Right Honourable LORD CHOLMONDELEY.

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T H E F O U R T H E D I T I O N,  
W I T H L A R G E A D D I T I O N S.

---

ELECTRICITY WILL PROBABLY SOON BE CONSIDERED AS THE GREAT VIVIFYING PRINCIPLE OF NATURE, BY WHICH SHE CARRIES ON MOST OF HER OPERATIONS.

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SOME YEARS AGO A LADY OF SWITZERLAND WAS STRANGELY AFFECTED BY IT.

BRYDONE'S TRAVELS.

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L O N D O N

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MDCCLXXVII.

T H E  
T O R P E D O

A  
P O E M

T O T H E  
E L E C T R I C A L E L I

A D D R E S S E D T O

M R J O H N H U N T E R , S U R G E O N :

A N D D E D I C A T E D T O

T H E R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E L O R D C H O L M O D L E Y .



T H E F O U R T H E D I T I O N  
W I T H L A R G E A D D I T I O N S .

E L E C T R I C I T Y W I L L P R O B A B L Y S O O N B E C O N S I D E R E D A S T H E G R E A T V I V I F Y I N G P R I N C I P L E O F N A T U R E , B Y W H I C H S H E C A R R I E S O N M O S T O F H E R O P E R A T I O N S .

S O M E Y E A R S A G O A L A D Y O F S W I T Z E R L A N D W A S S T R A N G E L Y A F F E C T E D B Y I T .

B A Y D E N ' S T R A V E L L E R

L O N D O N

P R I N T E D : A N D S O L D B Y A L L T H E B O O K S E L L E R S I N L O N D O N A N D W E L L I N G T O N .  
M D C C L X X V I I .

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# DEDICATION

TO

LORD CHOLMONDELEY.

MY LORD,

**I** TAKE the liberty of addressing the following Poem to you, as I know no one to whom it can be dedicated with so much propriety, or who possesses qualities so essential for the Patron of this Piece. I speak with some degree of confidence, having the honour of remembering your Lordship from a very early period, when you discovered the greatness of those parts which have since made so respectable a figure in Society.

It is observed, my Lord, that the faculties of people in general, disclose themselves at different periods of life : It has been your peculiar happiness to proceed uniformly, and the enlargement of your powers has been in proportion to your manhood. To a circumstance so fortunate for yourself, give me leave to add, that you have never suffered those parts, when you could help it, to lie dormant; nor lost one opportunity of seeking out new objects to employ them upon. If any thing can yet be more meritorious, it is, that in those which have been but imperfectly handled by others, you, my Lord, by throwing them into new positions, have disclosed hidden beauties, and new scenes of delight. With such parts, my Lord, you seem formed by Nature for great attempts, and the tenor of your life has shewn, that nothing could resist your progress.

In the Sciences, what is it that your Lordship has not accomplished? In Architecture, have you not erected a column which strikes every beholder with admiration at its beauty as well as novelty? Beautiful from its superior size, and novel from the frieze being at the bottom. Madam ———, that celebrated Antiquary at Paris, has often, I have been informed, handled this Pillar, but never could determine its Order. In the Mechanics, few people are ignorant of your improvements, particularly in those which relate to the Motion of Bodies, the doctrine of Elasticity, and the great pains you have undergone in making experiments upon the inclined Plane.

In the Arts, my Lord, you seem to have been equally successful, as far as your disposition may have led you. In Painting, who has excelled you in drawing

drawing at full length; in your fondness for the *Nude*; and, what still more uncommon, if we may credit some Female Connoisseurs, in taking a strong likeness of yourself!

Though master of this extensive knowledge, you descend to every thing. You have the goodness to make the Female World your particular care, and to take the Ladies under you, to whom you have an uncommon method of conveying instruction; uniting Pleasure with Improvement, the only way of making your lessons sink deep into the heart. But this, my Lord, is but a small part of your praise: it is your moral character that demands my attention. Have you not been remarked for your laudable enquiries after Innocence? Have you ever refused the purchase of any virtue that was to be had? Nay, have you not employed others in the same amiable pursuit? And by various little presents which you have bestowed on the deserving, have you not convinced us, that in the language of Scripture, you considered modesty “as a treasure far above rubies.” I do not exaggerate, my Lord, when I say, that all the great Virtues are yours,—Patience, Fortitude, Justice, Charity. In the pursuit of many a favourite object, have you not patiently endured what would have provoked the most gentle? And tho’ the ill-natured part of mankind is too apt to denominate a laudable ambition, Impudence; have you not, in spite of detraction, persevered in attempting every thing? As to Justice—it is said you are a Justice of the Peace;—and I shall only say of your Charity, that you are a perpetual Contributor to the Magdalen.

My

## D E D I C A T I O N.

My Lord, having all the veneration for you which such qualities deserve, I look forward with sorrow to that period, when age shall render your parts of no farther service. Those being lost, you can have no occasion for life; and we shall with less regret spare your departure from Society, where you have long stood so valuable a member.

I have the honour to be

Your Lordship's most devoted

And humble Servant,

The A U T H O R.

THE

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T H E

T O R P E D O.

ADDRESSED TO

Mr. JOHN HUNTER, SURGEON.

---

**O** THOU! whose microscopic eye  
Can every living thing descry,  
And search Dame Nature's womb!  
Whose power can raise the lifeless clay,  
Drag the pale spectres into day,  
And starve the hungry Tomb!

B

Whether

Whether at *Surgeons-Hall* thy knife

To the last dregs of canker'd life

Restores its wonted prime :

Or now to *Lock's* all-healing gate

Thou drivest thy chariot's gilded state,

Mercurially sublime !

Or watching o'er the sick man's pains,

Where Fever fires the swelling veins,

And Torture vents her groans :

Or whether now, with toil and trouble,

Fix'd o'er the charmed caldron's bubble,

You stir the murderer's bones !

On thee I call : Thy well-stor'd mind,

Form'd for the good of all mankind,

Can yet compassion feel :

Shall I in dark confinement rest,

Whilst in poetic numbers blest

Survives th' *ELECTRIC EEL* ?

What

What mighty difference should there be

Between this wanton Eel and me ?

What greater feats can he do ?

'Tis true, the wonder of the Throng

He draws the Multitude along ;

—— So did the famed TORPEDO.

Full well I know his polish'd crest,

His tempting form, his speckled vest,

Can female flames provoke :

When, warm'd by their creative hands,

Sudden his length erected stands,

And gives the electric stroke.

What tho' I may his tale believe,

That every girl, from Mother Eve,

Admires the pretty thing :

Yet all confess it, when they feel,

That tho' in form it looks an Eel,

It, Serpent-like, can sting.

Spite

Spite of the pain which they endure,

'Tis his, I grant, to work a cure

For palsies and for age :

Those master-strokes, I know not how,

Active as C—LT—N, or as H—WE,

Amid the battle's rage.

Composing all domestic strife,

Which oft falls out 'twixt man and wife,

Can ease the marriage yoke :

When home at night the husband reels,

Warm with *this fire*, he quickly seals ;

Forgiveness with a stroke.

Or, haply, should some puny elf,

All skin and bone, like CH—TW—ND's self (a),

But tantalize his FANNY ;

To Piccadilly strait she flies,

The Electric Eel her wants supplies,

—— Nor fears the need of HANNAY.

(a) This Gentleman's extreme leanness is attributed to the great fatigue he undergoes at the Council Office, he being obliged to sit with a pen in his hand for above an hour at a time.

Full

Full well I see each British Dame  
Has caught the philosophic flame,  
So charmingly imprest ;  
All eager, like that sapient King,  
To try the taste of every thing,  
And stick to what is best.

Sated at length with CH—LM—ND—LY's charms,  
GR—VSN—R takes T—RN—R to her arms,  
That avaricious Prig ;  
Such is the vigorous Damsel's zeal,  
She tries each species of the Eel,  
From Conger down to GRIG (b).

A touch of this Electric Fire,  
Fish, flesh, and fowl alike admire,

(b) A small species of Eel—and by which appellation Sir G—— T—— P——  
was distinguished in his youth, not from his vivacity, but from its similitude to the  
abbreviation of his own name,

Of every shape and size ;  
 Has it not swam in Lady L—KE (a)?  
 Has it not felt the ravenous beak  
 Of T—RN—R's *Bird of Paradise*?

Though oft electrified before,  
 Still pants the *Countess of ST—THM—E* (b)  
 For one more stout and boney :  
 Long has she tasted, some folks say,  
 Each different sort from Black to GRAY (c),  
 But fixt on that of ST—N—Y.

The harmonious Dame of Portman-Square  
 Still loves, tho' now nor young nor fair,  
 Those flashes in the dark ;  
 So much indeed the wanton Dame  
 Is pleased with that ethereal flame,  
 She covets EVERY SPARK.

(a) Formerly Lig—n—r, her present name she derives from a very athletic Gentleman, with whom *she at present lives* in the northern parts of Yorkshire.

(b) For various accounts of this lady, *vide Morning Post*.

(c) The gray Eel is a species peculiar to the lakes of Scotland.

F—TZR—Y,

## T H E T O R P E D O .

7

F<sup>I</sup>-TZR<sup>E</sup>-Y, Hell's new-elected Queen,

All things of Gods and Men had seen,

From Jupiter to Plutus ;

But owns at last that Mother Earth

Has given a greater wonder birth,

The *Electricus Gymnotus*.

The beauteous Lady C-TH-R-NE thought

The wily nets of Love had caught

A young and tender Eel ;

But, O ! ere many months are over,

I fear, fair Lady, you'll discover

You made a dangerous meal.

Here various humours fixt we see

In one point, Electricity ;

—— For all admire the Fish ;

But tho' the thing is good, they say,

Still they dispute about the way

Of dressing this same Dish.

What tho' it collar'd pleases best

The taste of AR---R and of W<sup>E</sup>-ST,

Immers'd

## THE TORPEDO.

Immers'd in melting jelly ;

The Irish sauce, cries CHARLOTTE H<sup>e</sup>-YES,

Is all the fashion now a-days,

——Is it not so, O'K<sup>e</sup>-LLY?

The Female World, sweet Eel! I know,

Have bound thy all-subduing brow

With many a laurel wreath ;

And when you rear your standard high,

The little Loves around it fly,

And Graces sport beneath.

To pious zeal, to good intent,

When oft in Woman's bosom pent,

Thy fancy can give motion ;

And tho' to Heaven she bends her knee,

Her tenderest thoughts employ'd on thee,

Can animate devotion.

The fusty Virgin, stale and wan,

With all her feign'd dislike to Man,

Has many an amorous wish:

Tho' shame on all these Eels she cry,

Does she not cast a wistful eye?

——“ What Cat's averse to fish?”

M—C—LAY

M—C—LAY and BATH-EASTON's Dame

Escape not this Electric flame,

Which does thro' all prevail ;

Nature's first law e'en they can feel :

——— For all allow they've caught *the Eel*

*Of Science by the Tail.*

These are his Arts, we all must own,

Which, spread thro' Country and thro' Town,

Immortalize his name:

But Sir JOHN PRINGLE must agree,

That Fish's Electricity

From the TORPEDO came.

My power, which dwells in Woman's eye,

Sports in her smiles, heaves in her sigh,

And wantons in her hair ;

My sparkling fires, which round her play,

Boast more of the æthereal ray,

And stronger flames declare.

Tho' his (*a*) *Conductor* may be large

As the tall mast of Lord Mayor's barge,

(*a*) Terms of Electricity.

D

Erect

Erect and fixt in air ;  
 Yet I *emit* as full a stream,  
 Pregnant with warm Electric Flame,  
 And mine's a larger *sphere*.

Whate'er D—ANE or M—LLS may say,  
 These Eels, I'm sure, cannot display

An older date than we do ;  
 The fam'd Medusa's Gorgon Head,  
 Whose shaggy front struck mortals dead,  
 Was only a TORPEDO.

JOB, too, if Scripture you believe,  
 Us'd to feel me from morn till eve,  
 And wish'd for nothing more :  
 So fond he grew of my warm touch,  
 He took by chance a stroke too much,  
 And made *himself* all *fore*.

In POTIPHAR's all-vigorous wife,  
 'Twas I that urg'd in amorous strife  
 Poor JOSEPH to my bed ;  
 His bashful Eel, unus'd to stand,  
 When graspt by my electric hand,  
 Slipt off his coat, and fled.

Under SUSANNAH's beauteous face,

I brought two Elders to disgrace ;

—— With reverence be it spoke :

For when TORPEDO took to water,

In jump'd the Elders quickly after,

And there receiv'd the stroke.

A spark from me set Troy on fire ;

E'en great ACHILLES' vengeful ire

Was subject to my frown ;

And SOLOMON, in all his glory,

Is but a song, an old wife's story,

Compar'd to my renown.

In those bleak lands, all rocks and snows,

Where the pale luke-warm sun scarce shews

A short half hour of day ;

The hungry Scot, with frozen breech,

Thro' the thick arms of ice and itch,

Can feel my potent ray.

Have I not serv'd my K---LLY's turn,

Who owns that I can sometimes burn,

And

And e'en create a pain ?

Witness that fervency of nose,

Which sure my flame superior shews

To claret and Champagne.

Lo! too, M---C---D---LD, now a Lord,

Who hides his fam'd forefather's sword,

Of Alexanders least:

But yet on me, and me alone,

He boldly draws, and pushes home

———*The nature of the Beast* \*.

The rosy, pimpled son of Grace

'Gainst carnal dainties turns his face,

And all such worldly cheer;

But when I offer him my dish,

The Glutton fixing on the Fish,

Keeps Lent throughout the year.

\* There are in the Creation four different species of Animals;---Birds, Beasts, Fishes, and Men. It is the fixt law of Nature, that the three first cannot usurp the sphere of either of the others, whilst the last alone can invade the species of any other. To illustrate this assertion, we need only turn our eyes to *Newmarket*, or the *Fashionable Clubs*, where we find men become *Pigeons* every day. There is no occasion to go farther than the *Bills of Mortality* for *odd Fish*, and it must be acknowledged there can be no greater *Beasts* than in the Court of Aldermen.

For

For me could TH<sup>R</sup>LE leave his laws,

To plead in foul Dishonour's cause,

Soliciting too well :

For oh ! each Hind and Kentish maid,

Of virgin innocence betray'd,

A mournful tale can tell.

'Twas I that form'd, to win all hearts,

Relentless Rudd's pernicious arts ;

My own, my favourite she !

I circumcis'd the (a) *naval Jew*,

Stript him of cash and honour too,

—— All that he brought from sea.

Full-powder'd and full-drest from France,

For me the ST-R-RS quit the dance,

—— Those feeble sons of Fashion :

To quicker time I make them move ;

And since 'tis Motion (b) causes love,

I raise in them a passion.

(a) An account of this Gentleman may be seen, by consulting the Trials of the Old Bailey, where he sustained, with uncommon credit, the character of an unbiassed Witness.

(b) For this assertion, vide *The Electrical Eel*.

E

What

What tho' to give F-TZP-TR-CK fire,

May no celestial art require,

For he can catch like tinder :

Have I not rais'd a doubtful flame

In M--CH's (a) wither'd, sapless frame,

Tho' burnt before to cinder.

My power can warm the clay-cold lump ;

For see old (b) H--R--NGT--N's dry stump

Still trembles like the steel :

Far different from MACKENZIE's page,

I find fresh pleasures for his age,

And teach him how to ———feel.

But what's e'en this ? ——— My fame speaks louder,

That Merchant known for farce and powder,

(a) As a proof of the state of his Lordship's constitution, it is confidently reported, that when in the course of three or four months, he is troubled with any imprudent ebullition of passion, he immediately sets off for Bath, to repair the loss he has sustained.

(b) This venerable Peer, from a long indulgence in various courses of Gallantry, has reduced his present pleasures to so confined a compass, as to derive no satisfaction now, but from the mere touch. Mr. Mackenzie has, indeed, given a very charming description of a *Man of Feeling*; but from some traits, which were never perceivable in his Lordship's conduct, the character seems to be somewhat different.

For

For Contracts and for Fancy ;  
With length of rod, unknown before,  
Attracts my sparks, to save his store,

And turns them on *poor* NANCY ( *b* ).

On many a thing to fix his eye,  
JACK W--LKES has tried, but look'd awry,

And ne'er could hit the mark ;  
Till to one focus brought, his sight  
Surveys the object of delight,

By my Electric Spark..

The vulgar pleasures of the Field  
Alone from Love the heart can shield,

And my all-piercing flame ;  
Long shall that callous DUKE ( *c* ) escape  
The roseat lip, the tempting shape,

———And know me but by name:

I lent my power to P-<sup>d</sup>-RS--<sup>o</sup>NS' charms,  
To add young graces to her arms;

( *b* ) The happy appellation by which this Gentleman distinguishes Miss B--N.

( *c* ) Every one knows the attachment of the Duke of D<sup>o</sup>rf<sup>e</sup>t to Cricket :  
The following anecdote will prove it. Two Clergymen were candidates for a  
Living in his Grace's presentation, which he bestowed on the best *Ratsman*.

And:

And make her beauties fell :  
 The fire pass'd from hand to hand,  
 Few could its rapid force withstand,  
 But feeble M---YN---RD (c) fell.

In every clime the unhappy Peer  
 Shall wander like the wounded deer,  
 Abandon'd and distressed :  
 Him shall the faithless Herd forsake ;  
 Nor one kind hand be found to take  
 The arrow from his breast.

What tho' Lord CH---LM---D---LY may conceal  
 A most enormous length of Eel,  
 Admir'd for size and bone :  
 This mighty thing when lank, depress'd,  
 A mere noun adjective at best,  
 Is useless when alone.

(c) This unhappy young Nobleman seems now making retribution for his past offences. Having spent a large paternal fortune in seducing female innocence to Vice, he is now amiably employed in conducting NANCY P---RS---NS in the paths of Virtue.

And

But warm'd by ELL<sup>is</sup>-T's wanton Wife,  
The ponderous body feels new life,  
Prepar'd to give the stroke,  
Erect in all the pride of Nature,  
E'en then to please this beauteous Creature,  
It stoops to wear my yoke.

Then hear, O HUNTER! hear my prayer!  
And be my better part thy care,  
Nor let my laurels fade:  
Confine me not in slothful ease,  
Where unemploy'd I ne'er can please  
—— A destitute Old Maid.

My power, the same in every clime,  
Still flourishes in spite of Time,  
As History can teach:  
My subjects ne'er the battle fly,  
But either firmly stand, or die  
Like ARMIGER (a) in the breach.

(a) This Gentleman, who was a General in the army, was engaged to be married to a beautiful young lady, and in order to open the campaign with due vigour, thought proper to take a dose of a certain stimulative powder, which operating rather too forcibly, enabled him to push thro' the outer gate, but he expired the moment he had made a Lodgement.

Me only SODOM's Sons disclaim,  
 Born for foul deeds, which but to name  
     Would shock the modest mind :  
 Bent on destroying all our race,  
 Affassin-like, they shun the face,  
     And meanly stab behind.

Give me then, HUNTER, to be seen,  
 And long of every Bard the Theme  
     My memory shall survive :  
 My fame shall be insur'd by Jews ;  
 Nor shall e'en H<sup>O</sup>-P<sup>K</sup>-<sup>i</sup>NS (b) self refuse  
     The purchase of my life.

But should degenerate Britain's Sons,  
 Deaf to Petitioners and Duns,  
     Refuse their friendly aid ;  
 No one stand up for modest Worth,  
 No warm and feeling hand stretch'd forth  
     To cover me when laid :

(b) This Gentleman's Character and Name are too well known to need any Comment—Suffice it to say, that being Guardian of the Morals of the City Youth, from his Office, in order to set them a proper pattern of Frugality, he purchased for himself a little annuity at the moderate price of 20*l.* per cent.

To

To that blest clime I'll quick repair,  
 And breathe prolific Irish air,  
     Where Health is ever seen ;  
 Where weeping Widows comfort find,  
 Where longing Virgins never pin'd,  
     In sickness called——green.

There due respect shall greet my name ;  
 For on such acts they build their fame,  
     On me alone depending :  
 What tho' the mind may be denied,  
 By strength of body 'tis supplied,  
     Which beats all understanding.

There will I spend the rapturous day,  
 Till Fate forbids my longer stay,  
     And stops each fond desire ;  
 Then will I take one parting kiss,  
 And in one long, long act of bliss  
     Voluptuously expire.

F I N I S.

THE T O R P E D O

To that black crime I'll quick return

And breathe the grove's fresh air

Where Health is ever seen

Where weeping Widows comfort find

Where longing Virgins never pine

In sickness called—green

There due respect shall greet my name

For on such acts they build their fame

On me alone depending

What else the mind may want



By strength of body

Which beats all uncertainties

Time will I find the righteous day

Thou shalt be my longer day

And hope each fond desire

Thou wilt I like one feeling live

And in one long long day

Thou shalt be my longer day